



The American Nuclear Society Young Members Excellence Award goes to early-career nuclear scientists who exhibit outstanding technical and managerial abilities. INL research scientist Piyush Sabharwall received the award this month.

Idaho research scientist wins American Nuclear Society honor

By Shannon Palus for *INL Communications & Governmental Affairs*

As a child, Piyush Sabharwall was always interested in how things worked, in taking things apart, in fixing them.

Now as a research scientist in the Nuclear Systems Design and Analysis Division at Idaho National Laboratory, Sabharwall is developing new technology for very high temperature nuclear reactors. He also works on ways to integrate nuclear power into the power grid with renewable sources, like wind energy — coupling a constant source with one that varies with the weather.

In November, Sabharwall received the American Nuclear Society Young Members Excellence Award for demonstrating overall excellence in a variety of areas for a period of time. The recognition goes to early-career nuclear scientists who exhibit outstanding technical and managerial abilities.

"Receiving this award lets me know that I am doing the right thing," he says. "I take awards as encouragement."

Sabharwall is modest. When asked why he thinks he won the award, he suggests that maybe they couldn't find anyone else. But in fact, ANS has refrained from giving the award in the past.

Currently, Sabharwall is the principal investigator on three projects, a board director on the Idaho NASA Space Grant Consortia and an active member in the local ANS section. Following completion of his Ph.D. in 2009 and based on his doctoral research work, he was invited to consult for two companies (Woodward, based in Denver and Cubit Power Systems, based in Canada) that work on energy optimization solutions.

His interactions with colleagues help ease the workload. The collaborative aspect keeps him going and provides him with energy to finish a project — even to stay up late. "I like working with people," he says. "I just do."



Sabharwall, right, discusses research with a graduate student in INL's Matched-Index-of-Refractive flow facility.



Sabharwall is a research scientist in INL's Nuclear Systems Design and Analysis Division.

"He is very ambitious and also very kind," says Michael McKellar, an INL scientist who has worked with Sabharwall on several projects, including the development of hybrid energy systems. "I have worked with him many times and he shows great respect to each member of his team."

The words "you must work, but not be worried" are written on a small whiteboard next to Sabharwall's computer. "Work" is underlined.

"He's not afraid to take on new types of work that he's unfamiliar with," says Carl Stoots, a mentor to Sabharwall. "He's a heck of a tennis player," Stoots adds.

In his free time, Sabharwall is involved with the Idaho Falls tennis community, serves as the vice president for the Idaho Falls Community Tennis Association and organizes cricket matches at a local park. Sabharwall balances work with hanging out with his wife, and taking care of their young daughter.

"If you spend time doing something different from work, it helps you focus," he said.

When asked if he sees himself still doing research at INL in 10 years, he says, "Yes, if I am making a difference, if I am learning, and if I can see my efforts amounting to something."

His colleague, Michael Glazoff, senior research scientist at INL, says, "He promises to grow into one of the future leaders of the American nuclear industry. I believe the award is just a harbinger of the good things to come as Dr. Sabharwall's career continues to

evolve."

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